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UDT - FRETILIN

Joint Statement

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British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia.
8a Treport Street, London SW18 2BP. Phone 01 874-3262.

UDT - FRETILIN

Joint Statement

For the first time in more than ten years, UDT (Union for a Democratic Timor) and Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) have joined forces to campaign internationally for recognition of East Timor's right to self-determination. On 24 March 1986, the two parties issued a Joint Statement in Lisbon. They also issued separate statements explaining the reasons for their joint action.

We take pleasure in publishing the full texts of these important documents.

London, 8 May 1986

Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin)

Democratic Union of Timor (UDT)

Joint Communique

Following previous meetings held under the auspices of CDS [Central Democratic Party], Fretilin and UDT delegations met on Friday, 14 March 1986 at the Gatimor [Cabinet for Timorese Affairs] in Lisbon, to discuss important matters regarding East Timor, with the aim of taking joint action in defence of the interests of all East Timorese people.

In order to inform public opinion about this momentous historical event enacted by these two political organisations, both of whom have a sense of unswerving responsibility for the question of East Timor, the two delegations wish to state that:

1) Fretilin and UDT, through their organisations in Lisbon, have decided to start holding bilateral meetings, conscious of their responsibility towards their people, and responding to the expectations manifested by various bodies of opinion.

2) These meetings started on 16 December 1985, through the important intermediary of the CDS, and both parties want such a role to continue and to be extended to other Portuguese political forces.

3) Thanks to earlier contacts, several joint decisions have already been taken, namely: a meeting with Mr Lucas Pires, Member of the European Parliament, and meetings with the presidential candidates, Dr Mario Soares, Dr Salgado Zenha and Professor Freitas do Amaral. It was not possible to have a meeting with Ms Maria de Lurdes Pintassilgo as she was out of Lisbon at the time.

4) The two delegations re-affirm Portugal's important role, by virtue of the responsibilites vested in her by the Portuguese Constitution and by international law. This is why they point to the need for greater effort, not only towards the media but also in political and diplomatic action by representatives of the Portuguese State and the genuine representatives of the East Timorese people.

5) They express their concern at the current major diplomatic offensive been undertaken by Indonesia, in the European Economic Community and in the Non-Aligned Movement, and the absence of an adequate response by Portugal among its allies, in spite of the overwhelming support of Portuguese public opinion for the struggle of the East Timorese people for self-determination and independence.

6) In order to give wider coverage to the joint actions already undertaken and to respond to all the expectations already generated, the two delegations agreed to hold a joint press conference on 24 March 1986, the third anniversary of the preliminary talks on 23 March 1983 between the Indonesian military command in East Timor and Commander Xanana Gusmao, Commander-in-Chief of the Timorese National Resistance.

7) At this difficult hour, the two delegations would like to bow their heads in tribute to the memory of all those who have given their lives for the freedom of the East Timorese people, and to appeal to all Timorese living abroad and to all those who stand for the freedom of the people, to support resolutely the heroic struggle of all those who are fighting and resisting on the mountains of East Timor, and who do so for the ideal of freedom amd independence.

This is why the delegations salute all the peoples, nations and states

who have supported the Timorese people's cause, notably the Lusophone African states. They also salute the UN Secretary General, to whom they once again address an appeal that he respect and apply the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

To the Portuguese people, they express deepest gratitude and esteem for the way they have welcomed and cared for the Timorese people in Portugal.

8) Finally, the two delegations acknowledge the positive and very significant position regarding Portugal's responsibilities for the defence of the right of the East Timorese people to self-determination and independence. which was unambiguously proclaimed by Dr Mario Soares, President of the Republic, on the occasion of his solemn swearing-in ceremony, in the presence of the highest representatives from a number countries.

Lisbon, 18 March 1986

For Fretilin:
Dr Abilio Araujo,
Chief of the External Delegation
of Fretilin (DFSE)

For UDT:
Dr Moises da Costa Amaral,
President of the UDT Political
Commission

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Fretilin (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor)

Brief policy declaration by Dr Abilio Araujo, chief of the External Delegation of Fretilin, on behalf of the Political Committee of Fretilin.

Ladies and gentlemen of the press,

First of all, we welcome your friendly and responsible presence at this joint Fretilin-UDT press conference.

It is common knowledge that this marks the end of a long, difficult and turbulent process of acquaintanceship between the two main political parties of East Timor, and at the same time opens a new chapter in the life and struggle of the Maubere people to defend and safeguard their right to self-determination and independence. This has come about as the result of an all-too-obvious bitter and painful reality, the threat of genocide hanging over the Maubere people, and from the need to respond to that threat by uniting all the fighting forces of East Timor on every front: on the home front with its military, political, social and cultural components, and on the external front which includes diplomatic and information activities.

Fretilin is well aware of the significance of this historic event, and of the repercussions it will have on the development of our struggle in the short and medium term. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to thank the leadership of the UDT for the openness with which it has responded to Fretilin's initiative in commencing talks between the two sides.

At this time of convergance of nationalist endeavours, I wish to emphasise the consensus which already exists on the need to preserve the autonomy and independence of the political, philosophical amd doctrinal positions in the political programmes of Fretilin and the UDT. There is room in East Timor for everyone who genuinely wants to contribute to its reconstruction. That number is not all that great for a people who, among their many losses, have seen 200,000 (two hundred thousand) of its sons and daughters perish.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Yesterday marked the third anniversary of the preliminary talks between the military command of the Indonesian Armed Forces in East Timor and Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, President of the Revolutionary Council for National Resistance and Commander-in-Chief of Falintil [Armed National Liberation Forces of East Timor]. This date takes on a particular significance at this stage of the struggle. Three years ago, the Indonesian authorities contradicted there own propaganda claiming that there was no organised resistance to their occupation, by agreeing to sit at one table with the supreme leader of the Resistance in East Timor, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, inside an area controlled by Falintil.

That same Resistance still fights on today. The vast amount of information reaching us from various sources in East Timor confirms that resistance and armed struggle is continuing. However, an enormous effort is being made to cover it up. The Indonesian generals are being helped in this by their promotion of Mario Carrascalao, the puppet governor of 'Tim Tim', the name Indonesia has given to its so-called 27th province. We already know about the preparations being made for the Mr Carrascalao's visit to Australia, aimed at giving publicity to so-called development in East Timor. What we ask is: Why doesn't Indonesia first try to convince the thousands of East Timorese now listed with the International Committee of the Red Cross, to stay in East Timor? From where we stand, we will do all we can to denounce this campaign being orchestrated by Indonesia.

At the same time, we challenge Indonesia to agree to the organisation of free elections in East Timor held under international supervision, to safeguard the wishes of our people for their future. We appeal to the Portuguese state never to desert its responsibilities towards our people.

We re-affirm to the international community that the Maubere fighters and the nationalist forces will never accept any solution imposed on them. We re-affirm that they demand the immediate participation of their legitimate representatives in any acts which seek to find a just, stable and lasting solution to the East Timor question.

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UDT (Democratic Union of Timor)

The UDT, together with Fretilin, is taking on the historic responsibility of shaping several joint initiatives, with a view to obtaining a fair and dignified solution to the problem of East Timor. This is a conscious decision, taken after consideration of all possible risks involved, but with a confidence gained from the fact that the conditions necessary for its success now exist for the first time, as a result of favourable circumstances in the political, ethical and legal arenas.

The intervention of the CDS [Central Democratic Party] conferred a serious and firm basis for meetings which had already taken place, the validity and soundness of which is indisputable. On the other hand, both UDT and Fretlin are in full control of their responsibilities as legitimate representatives of the people of East Timor, until a final solution is found. At the ethical level, the honesty of their respective positions is guaranteed by the openness, frankness and loyalty shown by both sides up to now in their approach to the basic question and to the goals they want to attain.

These circumstances were, are and will continue to be possible because

both sides respect each other's identity, and the characteristics that distinguish each from the other, particularly the essence of their ideologies, doctrines and philosophies, as well as their past responsibilities. Although they recognise that Timor is a separate historical and political entity which is not the property of any particular group but of all the Timorese people, Fretilin and UDT maintain that they are, by virtue of their specific responsibilities, natural products of that same reality, and they wish to represent it fairly.

It is for this reason that UDT welcomes Fretilin's recognition of the need for the two groupings to make a joint effort to defend the inalienable right of the Timorese people to self-determination. The UDT, which has been unfairly linked with those who argue for integration, re-asserts the nationalist tendencies which have characterised it in the most difficult moments of its existence, and the fight for its survival as a focus for resistance.

In spite of all this, UDT will not give in to the temptation of opting for easy, hasty solutions which experience has shown to be fatally tragic. It will seek unswervingly to defend its own identity both as a measure of self-respect and as a starting-point for unambiguous discussion in which it can bring up coherent points contributing to a stable and lasting solution.

Thus. UDT re-affirmts its identity as a political grouping based on Christian Democracy. As regards East Timor, it believes that the identity of the people of Timor is the result of the long-term presence of Portugal in that territory. This presence ultimately contributed to reinforcing an identity that had in some ways already existed before that contact was initiated. With this in mind, it seems useful to recall that East Timor was not a 'colony' but was the product of a 'contract' or 'pact' freely entered into by two nations, in which the religious factor played a dominant, structuring role.

So, UDT, recognising that Portugal, by dint of international law and the demands of its Constitution, continues to assert its responsibilities in relation to the future of East Timor and its people, and supporting the just aims of all Timorese scattered throughout the four corners of the earth, wishes to take this opportunity of appealing to the President of the Portuguese Republic and to the Government of Portugal, in the person of the Prime Minister, to defend uncompromisingly the Timorese people's right to self-determination, using all the political and diplomatic means at their disposal, and making use of the political capital gained as a result of its recent accession to the European Economic Community.

Finally, UDT wishes to bear witness to the fact that a profound and serious consensus has already emerged from the talks held up to the present between the Fretilin and UDT delegations. The two groupings agree to defend the installation of a democratic, western-style regime in East Timor, This is an extremely important and fundamental fact, and both UDT and Fretilin look forward to a decisive contribution from all Portuguese political forces to consolidate this, with the objective of focussing attention on what is really at stake: the defence of international law, and of the principles contained in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Lisbon, 24 March, 1986
Moises da Costa Amaral,
President of the Political Committee of UDT.

Indonesia....

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